

REMARKS

Claims 2-8, 18-21, 23, and 24 remain in this application, and claims 1, 9-17, 25, and 26 are now canceled. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Each of independent claims 23 and 24 is rejected as unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,443,520 to Schmaetzle et al. in view of U.S. Patent 5,749,617 to Weissrich et al. and U.S. Patent 6,761,396 to Ohtsu et al. Claims 23 and 24 are amended above, however, and reconsideration of the rejection of these claims is requested.

Currently amended claim 23 incorporates limitations previously appearing in claims 9 and 25, and further specifies that it is opening movement of a roof section that is blocked under the conditions recited. Currently amended claim 24, similarly, incorporates limitations previously appearing in claims 22 and 26, as well as specifying that roof section opening movement is blocked under the recited conditions. The Schmaetzle et al., Weissrich et al., and Ohtsu et al. documents previously relied on to reject claims 23 and 24, taken as a whole, do not suggest closing second and third roof sections by a definable amount and blocking movement of at least one of the roof sections as claims 23 and 24 now require.

Four additional patents, namely U.S. Patent 5,372,401 to Odoi et al., U.S. Patent 6,174,025 to Henderson, III et al., U.S. Patent 5,734,727 to Flaherty et al., and U.S. Patent 6,592,178 to Schober et al., are referred to in the prior rejections of claims 9 and 25, whose limitations now appear in claim 23, and claims 22 and 26, whose limitations now appear in claim 24. It is respectfully

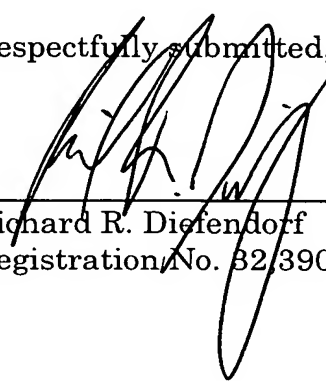
submitted that the disclosures provided by these four additional patents and the disclosures of the Schmaetzle et al., Weissrich et al., and Ohtsu et al. patents, as a whole, do not suggest the invention as now defined by claims 23 and 24. Attention is directed, for example, to the requirement now appearing in claims 23 and 24 that the logical sequence of movements includes blocking opening movement of at least one of the roof sections when another of the roof sections is in a particular position. U.S. Patent 6,592,178 to Schober et al. is relied on by the Examiner to show that "it was well known in this art to block movement of a roof section...." The movement delay discussed in column 3, lines 34-49 of U.S. Patent 6,592,178 to Schober et al., however, prevents pinching due to closing rather than opening movement, and thus fails to suggest a logical sequence of movements which includes blocking opening movement as claims 23 and 24 specify.

It is respectfully submitted that currently amended claims 23 and 24 are patentable for reasons discussed above. The rest of the claims remaining in this application are dependent claims and are considered patentable as well.

If there are any questions regarding this Reply or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

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Respectfully submitted,



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